



M E D I A R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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DCS FOSTER CHILDREN KILLED IN ALABAMA CRASH

Nashville - Two girls who had been staying together at a Winchester foster home were killed Monday evening in a serious crash near Rainesville, Ala.

Another motorist was seriously injured in the crash, according to Alabama authorities.

Driver Natasha Carter, 17, and passenger Teri Stanford, 16, were riding in a stolen car Monday evening when they were spotted by police near South Pittsburg, Tenn. Officers began pursuing the stolen Jeep, and the girls crossed the state line into Alabama.

Both girls were killed when they crashed head-on into a pickup truck, according to Alabama law enforcement officials.

"This is a devastating loss," said DCS Commissioner Viola Miller. "Our hearts go out to the families in Tennessee and Alabama, to the foster parents and to the DCS staff who had worked so hard with these girls."

The girls had been placed in the home of two veteran DCS foster parents who have extensive experience working with teenaged girls. The issues that had brought the girls into state custody were very similar, including conflict within their birth families, Miller said. Stanford is from Franklin County; Carter is from Marion County.

One of the girls had recently been placed on a trial home visit, but after several weeks, it had proven unsuccessful. She returned to foster care.

DCS case workers believe that the girls may have stolen the Jeep sometime Monday morning, before one of the girls left for a previously scheduled dental appointment with her case manager. After that appointment, the girls fled in the Jeep. The foster parents immediately reported the runaways to DCS case workers and to the local police.

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